



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor James L. Streeter, Councilors Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Paulann H. Sheets, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Streeter.

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Lee Vincent.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

None.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Lee Vincent, 1 New London Road, is concerned with the timeliness of posting agendas and meeting minutes on the Town website. Being a former employee of the Town, Mr. Vincent has previously had access to Legistar, the computer program used for many of the agendas and minutes. He requested that the public have access to Legistar through the Internet so that they would not have to go to the library or Town Hall when they want to search through past minutes and upcoming agendas.

Kevin Cini, 316 Groton Long Point Road, has no problem with walkers and bikers using the Mortimer Wright Preserve trails, but is concerned that if horses are allowed there will be manure twenty-five feet from his property. He stated that not only will there be an odor, but Mr. Cini's well is only forty feet away from the path. He noted that a Mystic business with 20 stalls for horses advertises 32 acres of trails connecting Pequot Woods to the Long Island Sound. Consequently, on a good day there is a possibility of 25-30 horses utilizing the trail. Mr. Cini is willing to share the woods, but urged Councilors to designate the main road for horse use rather than the smaller paths and wetland areas on the Mortimer Wright Preserve.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

The Town Manager stated that Legistar is a powerful tool that is used to make agendas and minutes and to track referrals. He does not know how easy it would be for the public to have access to at home, but will research whether the program can be available in a read-only format.

Mayor Streeter suggested that the Town Manager look into the logistics of accessing this program at the public library.

The Town Manager stated that he will research what can be done with the program and get the information, including potential licensing issues, to the Council.

Councilor Watson noted that Weekly Status Reports are now posted on the Town website.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**a. Approval of Minutes****2011-0042 Special Trust Fund Contributions****RESOLUTION ACCEPTING SPECIAL TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTIONS**

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Various Donations - \$465.21 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Gail Narita - \$200.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Groton Public Library Circle of Friends - \$100.00 - Library Discretionary

JJ Williams of the Fisherman Restaurant - \$250.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Michael Mondello of Edward Jones - \$1,000 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Charter Oak Federal Credit Union - \$500.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0057 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of February 15, 2011 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items**c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List****2010-0257 Appointment of Catherine Talbot as a Regular Member of the Harbor Management Commission**

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0038 Department of Education Youth and Family Services Funding

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0039 Department of Education Youth Services Enhancement Grant

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0043 Regulations for Parks and Recreation Facilities

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0045 Connecticut Dial-A-Ride Grant

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0052 Reappointment of Mark Turner to Retirement Board

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0053 Reappointment of David Hammerstrom to Retirement Board

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0056 Reappointment of Edward Martin to Shellfish Commission

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0060 Mortimer Wright Preserve Trail Update

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0061 Town Clerk Compensation

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilor Flax and Mayor Streeter received emails regarding the Mortimer Wright Preserve trail.

Councilor Johnson attended an Economic Development Commission meeting.

Councilor Sheets attended the final Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community meeting. She noted that the Task Force will be answering any questions about its final report at the Committee of the Whole meeting on March 8, 2011.

Councilor Kolnaski attended the Ledge Light Health District Finance Committee meeting and the Senior Center Computer Coordinating Council meeting. She also attended the Groton Heights School Reuse Task Force meeting where responses from its survey were discussed.

Councilor Flax noted that the next Noank School Reuse Task Force meeting will be on March 3, 2011.

Mayor Streeter received emails regarding the Phase II School Facilities Program, and went to the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce Breakfast where Governor Malloy was in attendance.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

The next regular meeting of the RTM will be on March 9, 2011, at the Groton Senior Center.

c. Clerk of the Council

The Town Clerk has had communications regarding the Thames Street Rehabilitation Program Ordinance and the Phase II School Facilities Program Ordinance.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager will issue a revised budget calendar on March 8, 2011. He distributed copies of the Board of Education budget, the City of Groton budget, and the Groton Long Point budget to Councilors, along with an attorney opinion regarding highway and police budgets. He received emails from Mr. Cini regarding discouraging horseback riding on certain trails. The Town Manager stated that the application to the Connecticut Department of Public Control (DPUC) for public access television has been submitted. Mr. Oefinger noted that the final workshop for the Mystic Mobility Study will be on March 2, 2011; a survey will be going out from the Groton Public Library regarding its services and areas for improvement; and a hazardous waste collection day is scheduled for July 16, 2011, at the Flanders Road Transfer Station. The Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for March 8, 2011, will begin at 6:00 p.m. to allow additional time for all the items on the agenda.

Councilor O'Beirne stated that the application to DPUC commits Town space and money. He believed that the final application would be reviewed by the Council before it was actually submitted.

The Town Manager noted that he was authorized to prepare and submit the application. The selection process is a lengthy one and if the Council decides not to pursue public access television, it can always withdraw the application.

2011-0066

Montville Request Regarding Pending Legislation

MONTVILLE REQUEST REGARDING PENDING LEGISLATION

The Town Manager noted that Montville has requested Groton's assistance regarding a proposed bill regarding a sexual offender treatment facility to be located in Montville.

Mayor Streeter requested a referral to decide whether the Town should draft a letter or not.

c. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Peruzzotti

No meeting, no report.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Johnson

No meeting, no report.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski

No meeting, no report.

d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Sheets

No meeting, no report.

e. Finance - Chairman O'Beirne

No meeting, no report.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Flax

Councilor Flax read the minutes of February 22, 2011, which are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Monteiro

No meeting, no report.

h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Watson

Councilor Watson read the minutes of February 22, 2011, which are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Streeter

Mayor Streeter stated that the resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the last Committee of the Whole meeting. There are some appointments to various boards and commissions on the agenda as well.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A motion to approve Resolutions 2010-0257 Appointment of Catherine Talbot as a Regular Member of the Harbor Management Commission, 2011-0052 Reappointment of Mark Turner to Retirement Board, 2011-0053 Reappointment of David Hammerstrom to Retirement Board, and 2011-0056 Reappointment of Edward Martin to Shellfish Commission was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.

2010-0257 Appointment of Catherine Talbot as a Regular Member of the Harbor Management Commission

RESOLUTION APPOINTING CATHERINE TALBOT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Catherine Talbot, 10 Florence Drive, is hereby appointed as a regular member (from an alternate member) of the Harbor Management Commission for a term ending 9/1/13.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0038 Department of Education Youth and Family Services Funding

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR FYE 2012 YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES FUNDING

WHEREAS, crisis intervention, prevention and support programs and short-term counseling services will benefit at-risk Groton youth and their families and

WHEREAS, funding is available from the State of Connecticut Department of Education to supplant a portion of the salaries of Groton Youth and Family Services Counselors who provide intervention and prevention services for at-risk Groton youth, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, Mark R. Oefinger, or his designee, is authorized to file an application with the State of Connecticut Department of Education (DOE) for FYE 2012 municipal youth services funding in an amount to be determined by the DOE and to amend contractual agreements for such funding to ensure continuation of short-term counseling, crisis intervention and prevention and support programs for Groton youth and families.

A motion was made by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0039 Department of Education Youth Services Enhancement Grant

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO APPLY TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPT OF EDUCATION FOR FYE 2012 YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING

WHEREAS, The State of Connecticut Department of Education offers Enhancement Grant program funding to municipally-based Connecticut youth services programs for supplies used in conjunction with programs and activities which directly and indirectly benefit Groton youth and offer services and support to Groton youth and families in areas such as youth enrichment, outreach programs, general support and positive youth development, and

WHEREAS, Groton Youth and Family Services has demonstrated its success in providing youth enrichment, outreach programs, general support and positive youth development, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, Mark R. Oefinger, or his designee, is authorized to apply for and contract with the State of Connecticut Department of Education (DOE) for FYE 2012 Youth Services Enhancement Grant program funding in an amount to be determined by the DOE.

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0043 Regulations for Parks and Recreation Facilities

RESOLUTION APPROVING REVISED REGULATIONS FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

WHEREAS, the Groton Parks and Recreation Commission is authorized, pursuant to the Groton Town Charter, to make rules and regulations, subject to the approval of the Town Council, and

WHEREAS, at their meeting on February 9, 2011, the Parks and Recreation Commission approved updated Regulations for Parks and Recreation Facilities, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves the proposed updated Regulations as noted above.

A motion was made by Councilor Monteiro, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0045

Connecticut Dial-A-Ride Grant

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT/CONTRACT FOR A GRANT FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton through the Senior Center participates in a regional effort to provide transportation services for elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and

WHEREAS, grant funds available to municipalities from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation are apportioned in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 13b-38bb resulting in \$44,519 available to the Town of Groton, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to execute all necessary Agreement/Contract on behalf of the Town of Groton with the Department of Transportation of the State of Connecticut and to affix the corporate seal, for the Dial-A-Ride grant for transportation services for elderly and disabled persons.

A motion was made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Johnson, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0052

Reappointment of Mark Turner to Retirement Board

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING MARK TURNER TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD

RESOLVED that Mark A. Turner, 11 Cove Street, Noank, is reappointed to the Retirement Board for a term expiring 12/31/13.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0053

Reappointment of David Hammerstrom to Retirement Board

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING DAVID HAMMERSTROM TO THE RETIREMENT BOARD

RESOLVED that David Hammerstrom, 112 Spyglass Circle, is reappointed to the Retirement Board for a term ending 12/31/13.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0056

Reappointment of Edward Martin to Shellfish Commission

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING EDWARD MARTIN TO THE SHELLFISH COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Edward Martin, 17 Woodland Drive, is reappointed to the Shellfish Commission for a term expiring 12/31/15.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0060

Mortimer Wright Preserve Trail Update

RESOLUTION RE-ENDORSING TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MORTIMER WRIGHT PRESERVE

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2009 the Groton Town Council passed a resolution endorsing Trail Improvements in the Mortimer Wright Preserve, and

WHEREAS, the majority of the proposed work has been completed using volunteer help, and

WHEREAS, volunteers initially involved in the original effort have recently approached the Town

Council concerning their desire to complete a portion of the project that was originally envisioned which would provide an additional trailhead in the vicinity of Route 215 and the Old Brook Street intersection, and

WHEREAS, this portion of the trail would be located on a 50 foot wide swath of Town owned land having frontage on Route 215, and now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council re-authorizes the installation of the above noted "access" trail utilizing volunteer help and that the immediate adjacent property owners to this section of the trail be notified of the Town Council action.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

Councilor Watson noted that he, along with Mayor Streeter, Councilor Monteiro, and Councilor Sheets have walked this property. He reported that the area that was used for paint ball is in the process of being cleaned up.

Discussion ensued regarding the use of horses. There are wells near these trails, areas with steep grades, and some paths that are only one or two feet wide.

As this is not a time-sensitive matter, Councilor Johnson and Councilor O'Beirne are in favor of postponing the vote on this resolution until it is clear what will be done.

The Town Manager stated that there are no improvements being proposed, but volunteers from Groton Open Space Association (GOSA) will be removing the overgrown brush. He noted that since the original resolution passed two years ago, it seemed wise to inform adjacent property owners and Town residents that this cleanup work would be taking place. He stated that the issue of rules and signage regarding horses on Town properties should be a separate referral.

After discussion, Councilors agreed to approve this resolution with the stipulation that a sign be posted in this 50 foot wide swath that says "No Equestrian Access".

In connection with this issue, the Town Manager stated that there have been discussions in the past between the Traffic Authority and the State regarding speed limits on Route 215, but the State did not want to lower the speed at that time. However, these concerns can be discussed with the State again.

The motion carried unanimously

2011-0067

Use of Town of Groton Open Space by Horses

USE OF TOWN OF GROTON OPEN SPACE BY HORSES

Councilor Flax and Councilor Watson requested a referral to designate where horses will/will not be permitted on Groton's open space land and trails, and to recommend the appropriate signage and rules.

2011-0061

Town Clerk Compensation

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE TOWN CLERK'S COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2011 the Groton Town Council Committee of the Whole met in open session with Betsy Moukawsher, Groton Town Clerk for the purpose of discussing the Town Clerk's compensation, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council overwhelmingly supports the job that the Town Clerk has done this past year, and

WHEREAS, there are uncertain economic conditions facing the Town, state and nation, now

therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Council has decided that there will be no salary increase for the Town Clerk at this time.

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, that this matter be Adopted as Amended.

Councilor O'Beirne stated that the Town Council is very pleased with the performance of the Town Clerk and that this resolution is due to the current economy.

MOTION TO AMEND to add a paragraph to read, "WHEREAS, the Town Council overwhelmingly supports the job that the Town Clerk has done this past year," was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Johnson.

VOTE on Motion to Amend passed unanimously.

The motion carried unanimously

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

The Town Manager stated that there will be 15 minute delays periodically on the Mystic drawbridge. Unfortunately the schedule for these delays cannot be determined ahead of time to give the public advanced warning.

Councilor Sheets requested an update on designating buildings for the Photovoltaic Solar Electric System. The Town Manager stated that specific buildings have not been identified yet.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant